

their lives; in 2000, almost 9 percent of clergy were 65 or older, compared with only 3 percent of workers in all occupations.

Religious leaders must exude confidence and motivation, while remaining tolerant and able to listen to the needs of others. They should be capable of making difficult decisions, working under pressure, and living up to the moral standards set by their faith and community.

The following statements provide more detailed information on Protestant ministers, Rabbis, and Roman Catholic priests.

Protestant Ministers

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Significant Points

- Entry requirements vary greatly; many denominations require a bachelor's degree followed by study at a theological seminary, whereas others have no formal educational requirements.
- Competition for positions will vary among denominations and geographic regions.

Nature of the Work

Protestant ministers lead their congregations in worship services and administer the various rites of the church, such as baptism, confirmation, and Holy Communion. The services that ministers conduct differ among the numerous Protestant denominations and even among congregations within a denomination. In many denominations, ministers follow a traditional order of worship; in others, they adapt the services to the needs of youth and other groups within the congregation. Most services include Bible readings, hymn singing, prayers, and a sermon. In some denominations, Bible readings by members of the congregation and individual testimonials constitute a large part of the service. In addition to these duties, ministers officiate at weddings, funerals, and other occasions.

Each Protestant denomination has its own hierarchical structure. Some ministers are responsible only to the congregation they serve, whereas others are assigned duties by elder ministers or by the bishops of the diocese they serve. In some denominations, ministers are reassigned to a new pastorate by a central governing body or diocese every few years.



The services that Protestant ministers conduct differ among the numerous denominations.

Ministers who serve small congregations usually work personally with parishioners. Those who serve large congregations may share specific aspects of the ministry with one or more associates or assistants, such as a minister of education or a minister of music.

Employment

There are many denominations; however, most ministers are employed by the five largest Protestant bodies—Baptist, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist, and Presbyterian.

Although most ministers are located in urban areas, many serve two or more smaller congregations in less densely populated areas. Some small churches increasingly employ part-time ministers who are seminary students, retired ministers, or holders of secular jobs. Unpaid pastors serve other churches with meager funds. In addition, some churches employ specially trained members of the laity to conduct nonliturgical functions.

Training and Other Qualifications

Educational requirements for entry into the Protestant ministry vary greatly. Many denominations require, or at least strongly prefer, a bachelor's degree followed by study at a theological seminary. However, some denominations have no formal educational requirements, and others ordain persons having various types of training from Bible colleges or liberal arts colleges. Many denominations now allow women to be ordained, but some do not. Persons considering a career in the ministry should first verify the ministerial requirements with their particular denomination.

In general, each large denomination has its own schools of theology that reflect its particular doctrine, interests, and needs. However, many of these schools are open to students from other denominations. Several interdenominational schools associated with universities give both undergraduate and graduate training covering a wide range of theological points of view.

In 1999-2000, the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada accredited 206 Protestant denominational theological schools. These schools only admit students who have received a bachelor's degree or its equivalent from an accredited college. After college graduation, many denominations require a 3-year course of professional study in one of these accredited schools, or seminaries, for the degree of Master of Divinity.

The standard curriculum for accredited theological schools consists of four major categories: Biblical studies, history, theology, and practical theology. Courses of a practical nature include pastoral care, preaching, religious education, and administration. Many accredited schools require that students work under the supervision of a faculty member or experienced minister. Some institutions offer Doctor of Ministry degrees to students who have completed additional study—usually 2 or more years—and served at least 2 years as a minister. Scholarships and loans often are available for students of theological institutions.

Persons who have denominational qualifications for the ministry usually are ordained after graduation from a seminary or after serving a probationary pastoral period. Denominations that do not require seminary training ordain clergy at various appointed times. Some churches ordain ministers with only a high school education.

Women and men entering the clergy often begin their careers as pastors of small congregations or as assistant pastors in large churches. Pastor positions in large metropolitan areas or in large congregations often require many years of experience.

Job Outlook

Job opportunities as Protestant ministers should be best for graduates of theological schools. The degree of competition for positions will vary among denominations and geographic regions. For

example, relatively favorable prospects are expected for ministers in evangelical churches. Competition, however, will be keen for responsible positions serving large, urban congregations. Ministers willing to work part time or for small, rural congregations should have better opportunities. Many job openings will stem from the need to replace ministers who retire, die, or leave the ministry.

For newly ordained Protestant ministers who are unable to find parish positions, employment alternatives include working in youth counseling, family relations, and social welfare organizations; teaching in religious educational institutions; or serving as chaplains in the Armed Forces, hospitals, universities, and correctional institutions.

Earnings

Salaries of Protestant clergy vary substantially, depending on experience, denomination, size and wealth of the congregation, and geographic location. For example, some denominations tie a minister's pay to the average pay of the congregation or the community. As a result, ministers serving larger, wealthier congregations often earned significantly higher salaries than those in smaller, less affluent areas or congregations. Ministers with modest salaries sometimes earn additional income from employment in secular occupations.

Sources of Additional Information

Persons who are interested in entering the Protestant ministry should seek the counsel of a minister or church guidance worker. Theological schools can supply information on admission requirements. For information on special requirements for ordination, prospective ministers also should contact the ordination supervision body of their particular denomination.

Rabbis

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Significant Points

- Ordination usually requires completion of a college degree followed by a 4- or 5-year program at a Jewish seminary.
- Job opportunities for rabbis are expected in all four major branches of Judaism through the year 2010.

Nature of the Work

Rabbis serve Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, and Reconstructionist Jewish congregations. Regardless of the branch of Judaism they serve or their individual points of view, all rabbis preserve the substance of Jewish religious worship. Congregations differ in the extent to which they follow the traditional form of worship—for example, in the wearing of head coverings, in the use of Hebrew as the language of prayer, and in the use of instrumental music or a choir. Additionally, the format of the worship service and, therefore, the ritual that the rabbi uses may vary even among congregations belonging to the same branch of Judaism.

Rabbis have greater independence in religious expression than other clergy, because of the absence of a formal religious hierarchy in Judaism. Instead, rabbis are responsible directly to the board of trustees of the congregation they serve. Those serving large congregations may spend considerable time in administrative duties, working with their staffs and committees. Large congregations frequently have associate or assistant rabbis, who often serve as educational directors. All rabbis play a role in community relations. For example, many rabbis serve on committees, alongside business



Rabbis serve as teachers of the principles and practice of Judaism.

and civic leaders in their communities to help find solutions to local problems.

Rabbis also may write for religious and lay publications and teach in theological seminaries, colleges, and universities.

Employment

Although the majority of rabbis served congregations representing the four main branches of Judaism, many rabbis functioned in other settings. Some taught in Jewish studies programs at colleges and universities, whereas others served as chaplains in hospitals, colleges, or the military. Additionally, some rabbis held positions in one of the many social service or Jewish community agencies.

Although rabbis serve Jewish communities throughout the Nation, they are concentrated in major metropolitan areas with large Jewish populations.

Training and Other Qualifications

To become eligible for ordination as a rabbi, a student must complete a course of study in a seminary. Entrance requirements and the curriculum depend upon the branch of Judaism with which the seminary is associated. Most seminaries require applicants to be college graduates.

Jewish seminaries typically take 5 years for completion of studies, with an additional preparatory year required for students without sufficient grounding in Hebrew and Jewish studies. In addition to the core academic program, training generally includes fieldwork and internships providing hands-on experience and, in some cases, study in Jerusalem. Seminary graduates are awarded the title Rabbi and earn the Master of Arts in Hebrew Letters degree. After more advanced study, some earn the Doctor of Hebrew Letters degree.

In general, the curricula of Jewish theological seminaries provide students with a comprehensive knowledge of the Bible, the Torah, rabbinic literature, Jewish history, Hebrew, theology, and courses in education, pastoral psychology, and public speaking. Students receive extensive practical training in dealing with social problems in the community. Training for alternatives to the pulpit, such as leadership in community services and religious education, is increasingly stressed. Some seminaries grant advanced academic degrees in such fields as biblical and Talmudic research. All Jewish theological seminaries make scholarships and loans available.

Major rabbinical seminaries include the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, which educates rabbis for the Conservative branch; the Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, which educates rabbis for the Reform branch; and the Reconstructionist